SUPERMAN
IN ACTION COMICS
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JUNE 7
BASED ON THE CHARACTERS CREATED BY LEE FALK
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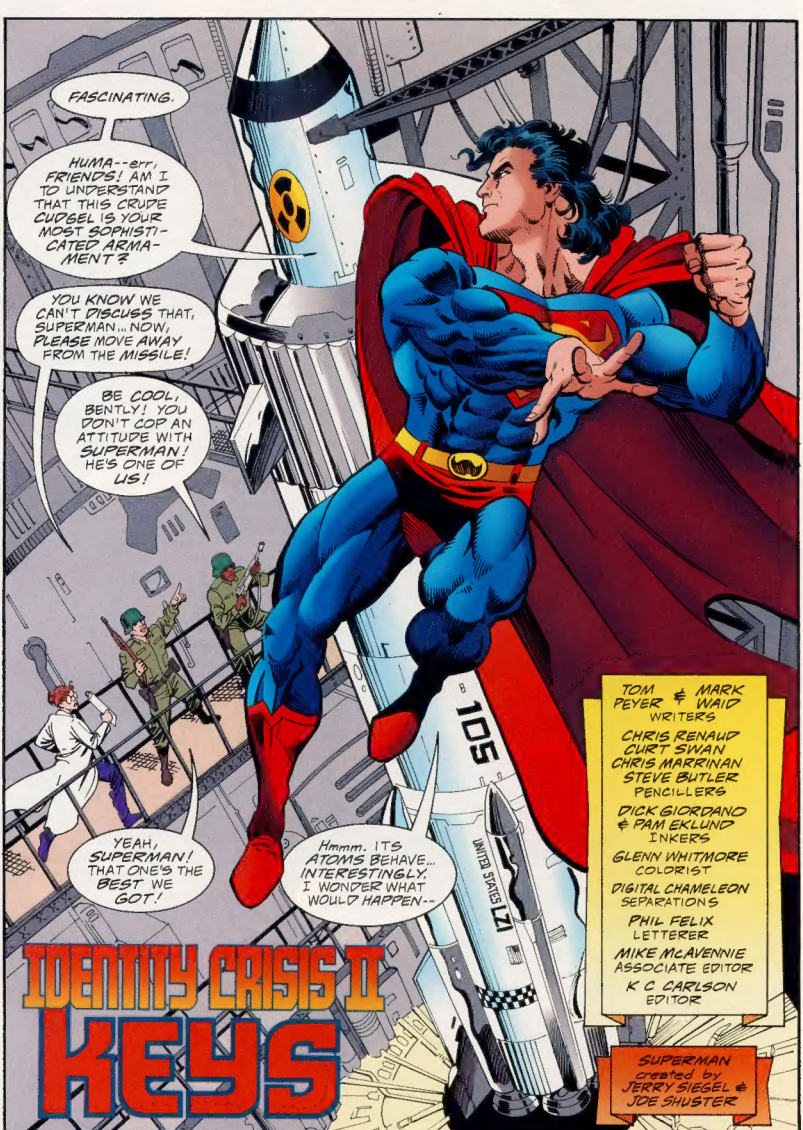
FASCINATING.
HUMA--err, FRIENDS! AM I TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS CRUDE CUDGEL IS YOUR MOST SOPHISTICATED ARMAMENT?
YOU KNOW WE CAN'T DISCUSS THAT, SUPERMAN... NOW, PLEASE MOVE AWAY FROM THE MISSILE!
BE COOL, BENTLY! YOU DON'T COP AN ATTITUDE WITH SUPERMAN! HE'S ONE OF US!
YEAH, SUPERMAN! THAT ONE'S THE BEST WE GOT!
Hmmm. ITS ATOMS BEHAVE... INTERESTINGLY. I WONDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN--
105
UNITED STATES

IDENTITY CRISIS II
KEYS

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WRITERS

CHRIS RENAUD
CURT SWAN
CHRIS MARRINAN
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PHIL FELIX
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SUPERMAN
created by
JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

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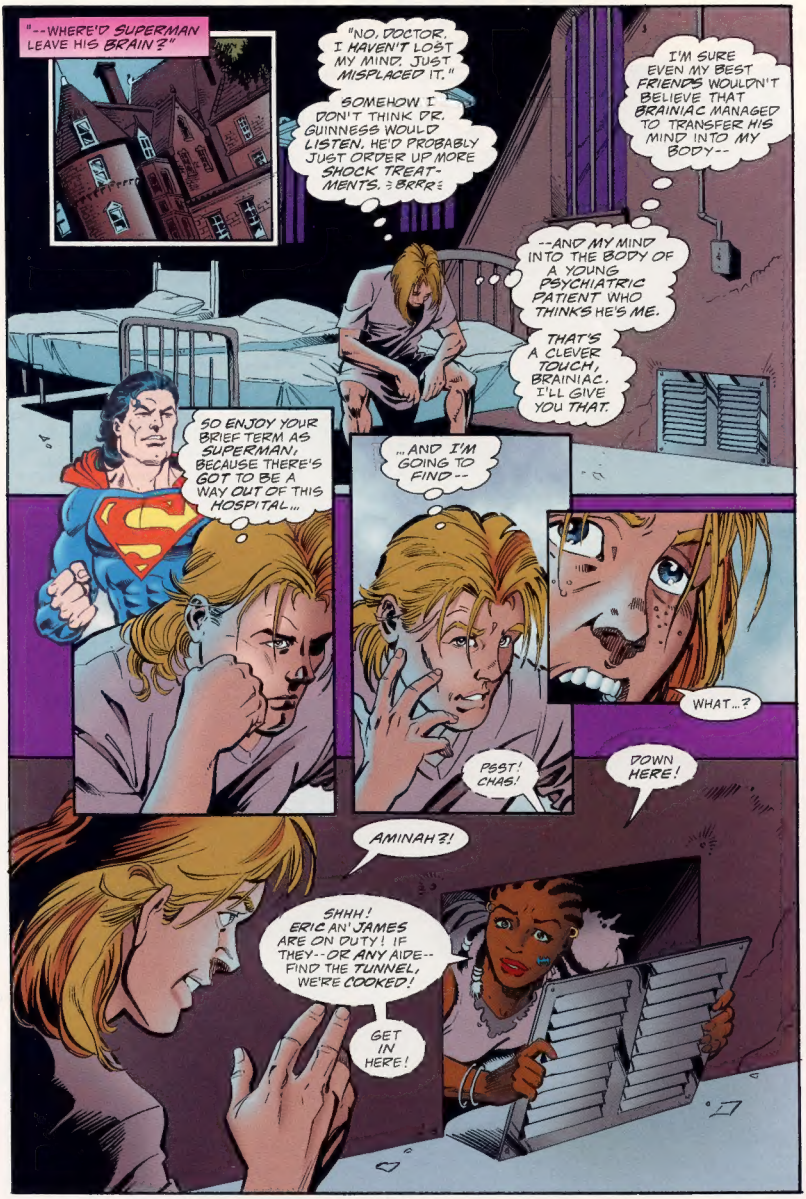
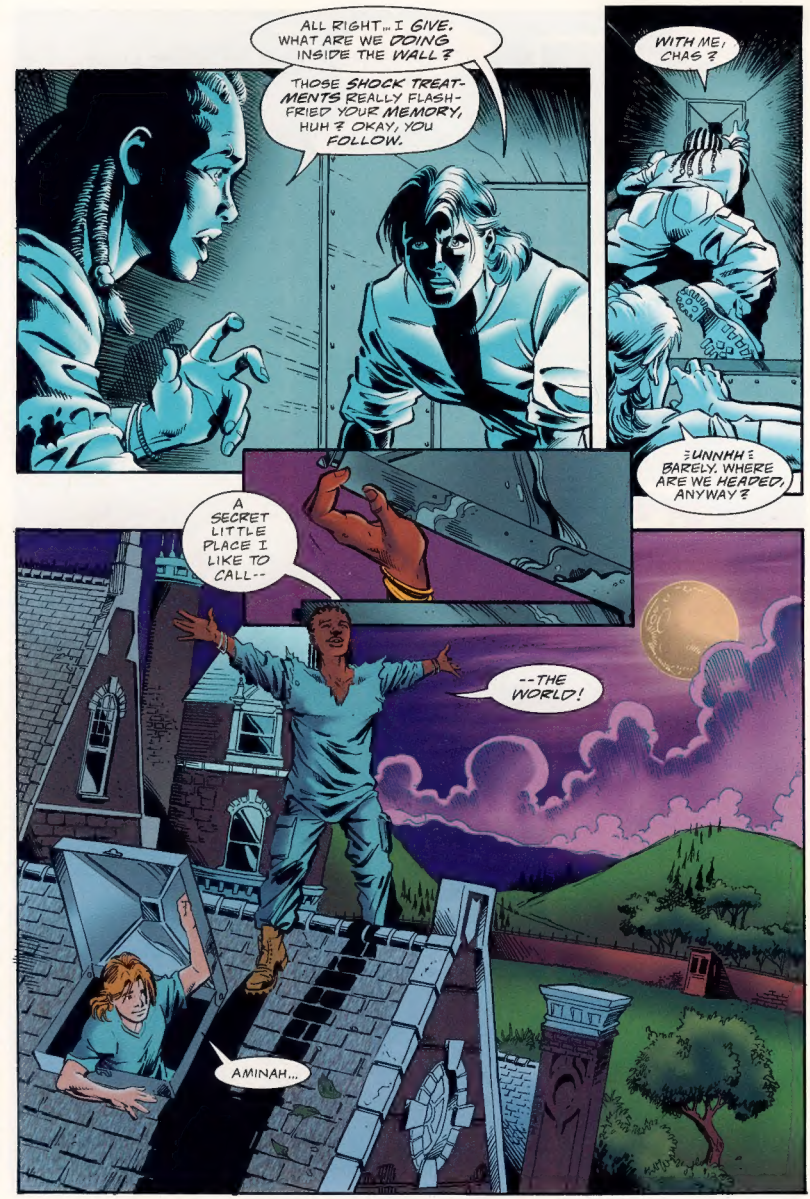
--IF I APPLY HEAT?
SSSSSSSS
SUPERMAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE HE'S DOING? I TOLD YOU NOT TO LET HIM NEAR--
SUPER-MAN! STOP! NOW!
SUPERMAN! PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR HEAT-VISION!
YOU COULD DETONATE THAT WARHEAD! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT, SUPER-MAN? TO BE THE MURDERER OF MILLIONS?!
PLEASE, SUPERMAN! PLEASE--!
MAN! DOC, WE JUST DODGED FLIPPIN' ARMAGEDDON!
FWOOOSH!
DID WE? HE ACTED LIKE HE'D NEVER HEARD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS! NEVER THOUGHT I'D SAY THIS, BUT--


"--WHERE'D SUPERMAN LEAVE HIS BRAIN?"
"NO, DOCTOR. I HAVEN'T LOST MY MIND. JUST MISPLACED IT."
SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK DR. GUINNESS WOULD LISTEN. HE'D PROBABLY JUST ORDER UP MORE SHOCK TREATMENTS. BRRR
I'M SURE EVEN MY BEST FRIENDS WOULDN'T BELIEVE THAT BRAINIAC MANAGED TO TRANSFER HIS MIND INTO MY BODY--
--AND MY MIND INTO THE BODY OF A YOUNG PSYCHIATRIC PATIENT WHO THINKS HE'S ME.
THAT'S A CLEVER TOUCH, BRAINIAC. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT.
SO ENJOY YOUR BRIEF TERM AS SUPERMAN, BECAUSE THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY OUT OF THIS HOSPITAL...
...AND I'M GOING TO FIND--
WHAT...?
PSST! CHAS!
DOWN HERE!
AMINAH?!
SHHH! ERIC AN' JAMES ARE ON DUTY! IF THEY--OR ANY AIDE--FIND THE TUNNEL, WE'RE COOKED!
GET IN HERE!


ALL RIGHT... I GIVE. WHAT ARE WE DOING INSIDE THE WALL?
THOSE SHOCK TREATMENTS REALLY FLASH-FRIED YOUR MEMORY, HUH? OKAY, YOU FOLLOW.
WITH ME, CHAS?
:UNNNH: BARELY. WHERE ARE WE HEADED, ANYWAY?
A SECRET LITTLE PLACE I LIKE TO CALL--
--THE WORLD!
AMINAH...

SPEED READING!

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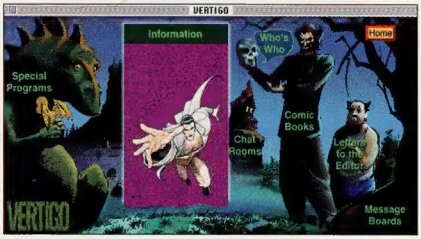

MAY EVENTS

CHUCK DIXON
RON MARZ
WRITERS
GREEN LANTERN/ GREEN ARROW: "HARD-TRAVELING HEROES: THE NEXT GENERATION"
MAY 23, 7:00 PM ET

MARK WAID
WRITER
KINGDOM COME
MAY 21, 9:00 PM ET

ALEX ROSS
ARTIST
DAN RASPLER
EDITOR
KINGDOM COME
MAY 30, 7:00 PM ET

JUNE EVENTS

JAMES ROBINSON
WRITER
STARMAN
JUNE 11, 7:00 PM ET

GRANT MORRISON
WRITER
THE INVISIBLES, FLEX MENTALLO
JUNE 18, 7:00 PM ET

CHUCK DIXON
GRAHAM NOLAN
DETECTIVE COMICS #700
JUNE 24, 7:00 PM ET

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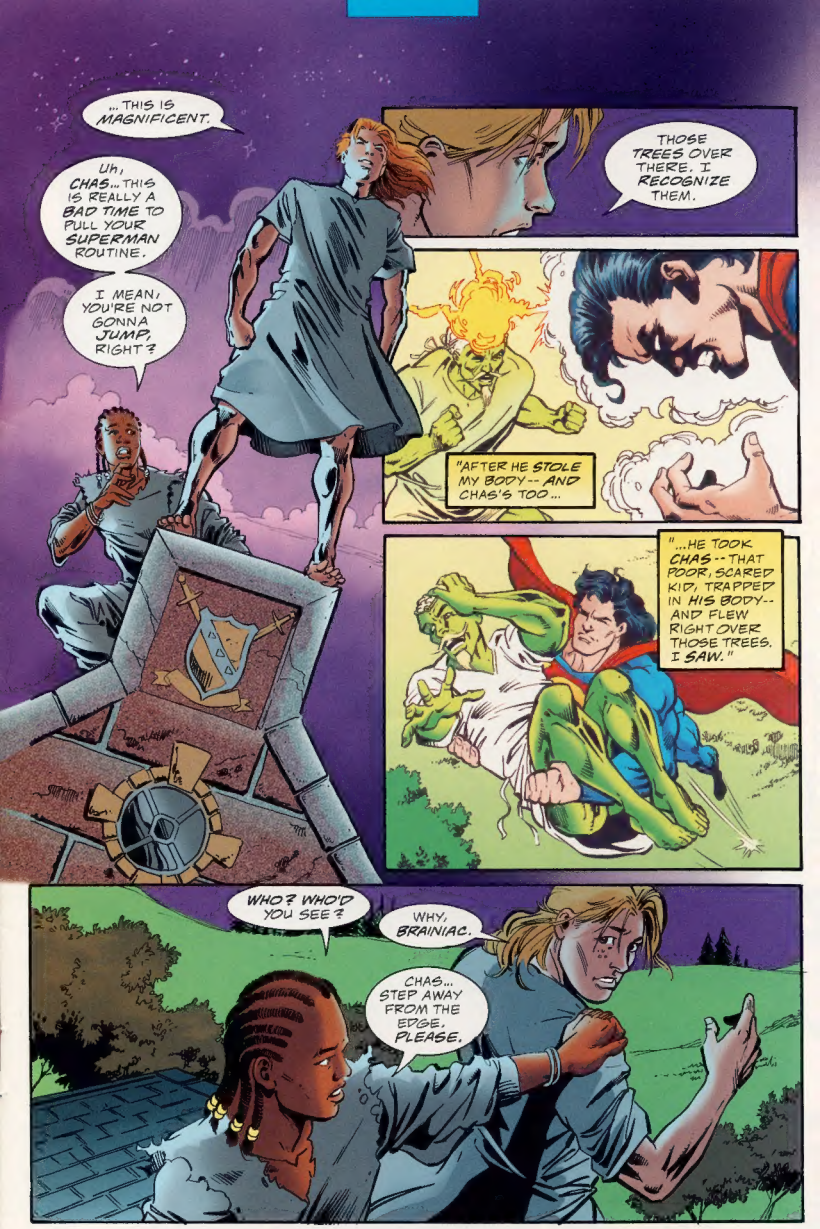
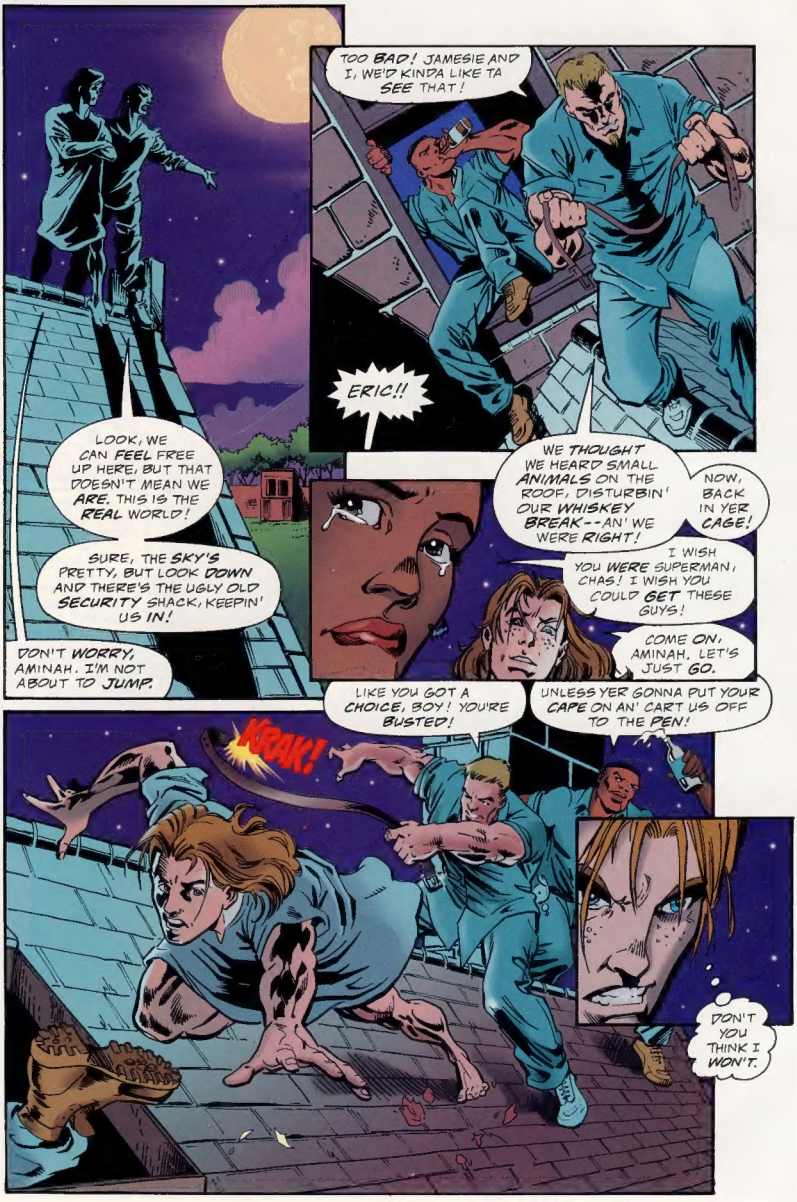
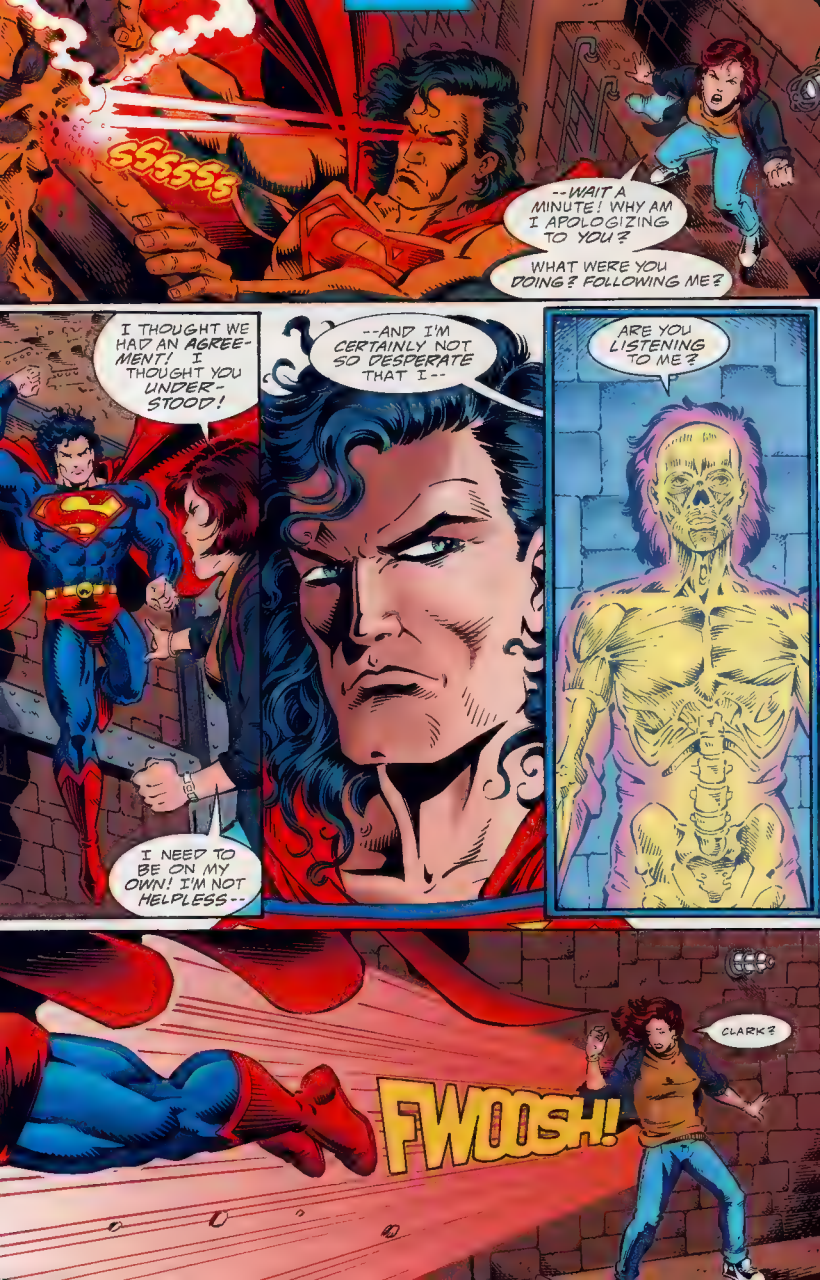
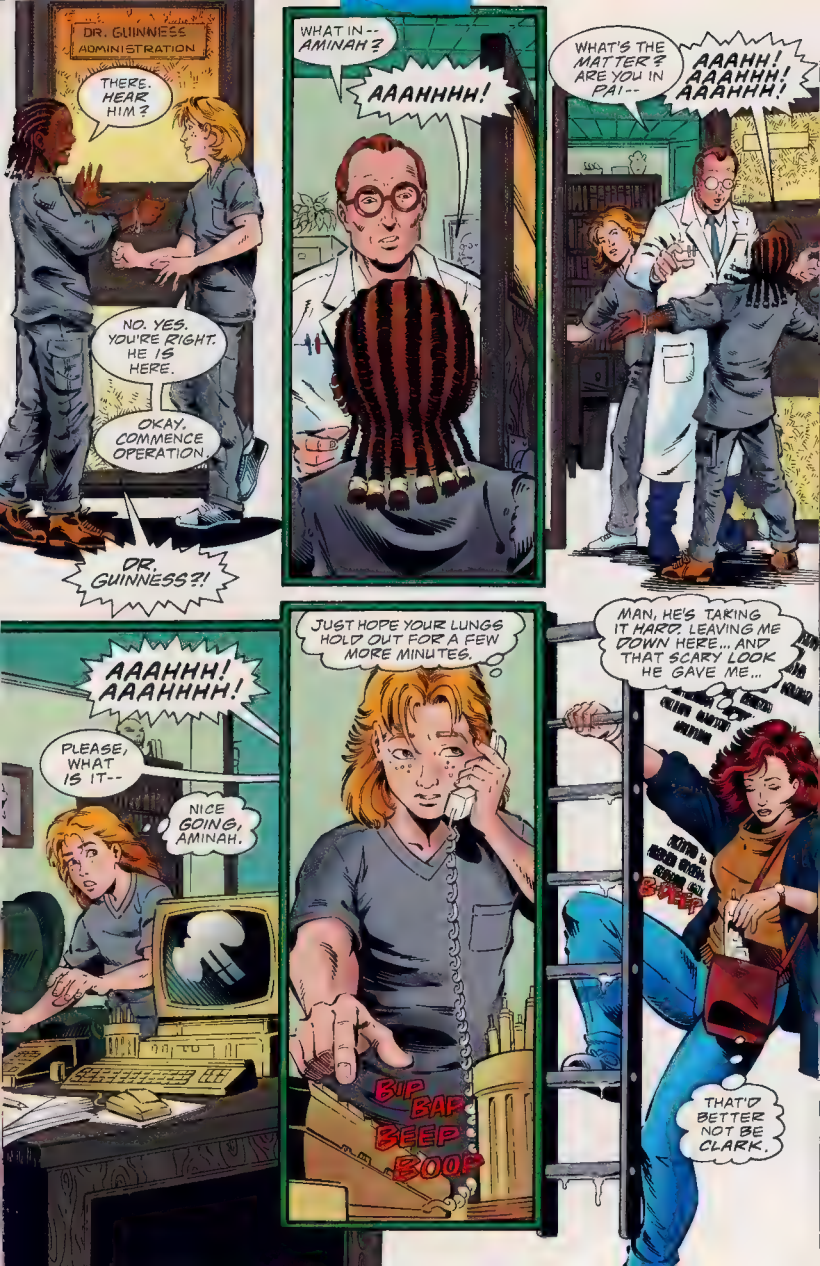

... THIS IS MAGNIFICENT.
Uh, CHAS... THIS IS REALLY A BAD TIME TO PULL YOUR SUPERMAN ROUTINE.
I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT GONNA JUMP, RIGHT?
THOSE TREES OVER THERE. I RECOGNIZE THEM.
"AFTER HE STOLE MY BODY-- AND CHAS'S TOO...
"...HE TOOK CHAS -- THAT POOR, SCARED KID, TRAPPED IN HIS BODY-- AND FLEW RIGHT OVER THOSE TREES. I SAW."
WHO? WHO'D YOU SEE?
WHY, BRAINIAC.
CHAS... STEP AWAY FROM THE EDGE. PLEASE.


TOO BAD! JAMESIE AND I, WE'D KINDA LIKE TA SEE THAT!
ERIC!!
LOOK, WE CAN FEEL FREE UP HERE. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE ARE. THIS IS THE REAL WORLD!
SURE, THE SKY'S PRETTY, BUT LOOK DOWN AND THERE'S THE UGLY OLD SECURITY SHACK, KEEPIN' US IN!
DON'T WORRY, AMINAH. I'M NOT ABOUT TO JUMP.
WE THOUGHT WE HEARD SMALL ANIMALS ON THE ROOF, DISTURBIN' OUR WHISKEY BREAK--AN' WE WERE RIGHT!
NOW, BACK IN YER CAGE!
I WISH YOU WERE SUPERMAN, CHAS! I WISH YOU COULD GET THESE GUYS!
COME ON, AMINAH. LET'S JUST GO.
LIKE YOU GOT A CHOICE, BOY! YOU'RE BUSTED!
UNLESS YER GONNA PUT YOUR CAPE ON AN' CART US OFF TO THE PEN!
KRAK!
DON'T YOU THINK I WON'T.

URRR-- HURRHH--
LOIS, LOIS LANE, AND YOU ARE--?
LOOK, I'M SORRY! I WAS JUST WAITING FOR THE D-TRAIN! I DIDN'T KNOW THIS WAS YOUR LIVING ROOM, I SWEAR, I--
YOU SHOULD SNARL MORE OFTEN! IT'S A GREAT LOOK FOR YOU! COME ON, SAY :HURRR!:
--HURRRHH!
ALL RIGHT! I WAS LOOKING FOR A SOCIOPATHIC BULLY WHO HAUNTS THE TUNNELS, BUT YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT HIM, BUT--SAYY!
:RAARR!:
FAASH!
WHATEVER!
HEH! BY THE TIME YOU CAN SEE AGAIN, I'LL BE--
--A MEMORY.
GREAT.
THE "D" TRAIN.

--OH--
SKRUK
--MY--
KLUNCH
--GOD--
CHUNK
--IT'S--
--YOU!?
WAIT, I-- I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET DOWN FROM--
WHROOOOMM
--OH.
YOU'RE STILL BUSY. SORRY, I--


SSSSSS
--WAIT A MINUTE! WHY AM I APOLOGIZING TO YOU?
WHAT WERE YOU DOING? FOLLOWING ME?
I THOUGHT WE HAD AN AGREEMENT! I THOUGHT YOU UNDERSTOOD!
I NEED TO BE ON MY OWN! I'M NOT HELPLESS--
--AND I'M CERTAINLY NOT SO DESPERATE THAT I--
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
FWOOSH!
CLARK?


DR. GUINNESS
ADMINISTRATION
THERE. HEAR HIM?
NO. YES. YOU'RE RIGHT. HE IS HERE.
OKAY. COMMENCE OPERATION.
DR. GUINNESS?!
WHAT IN-- AMINAH?
AAAHHHH!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? ARE YOU IN PA!--
AAAHH! AAAHHH! AAAHHH!
AAAHHH! AAAHHHH!
PLEASE, WHAT IS IT--
NICE GOING, AMINAH.
JUST HOPE YOUR LUNGS HOLD OUT FOR A FEW MORE MINUTES.
BIP BAP BEEP BOOP
MAN, HE'S TAKING IT HARD. LEAVING ME DOWN HERE... AND THAT SCARY LOOK HE GAVE ME...
BEEP
THAT'D BETTER NOT BE CLARK.

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MEETING HIS DESTINY THIS JUNE
BY GRANT MORRISON, MARK MILLAR, H. STEVEN SHANE, AND KEITH CHAMPAGNE
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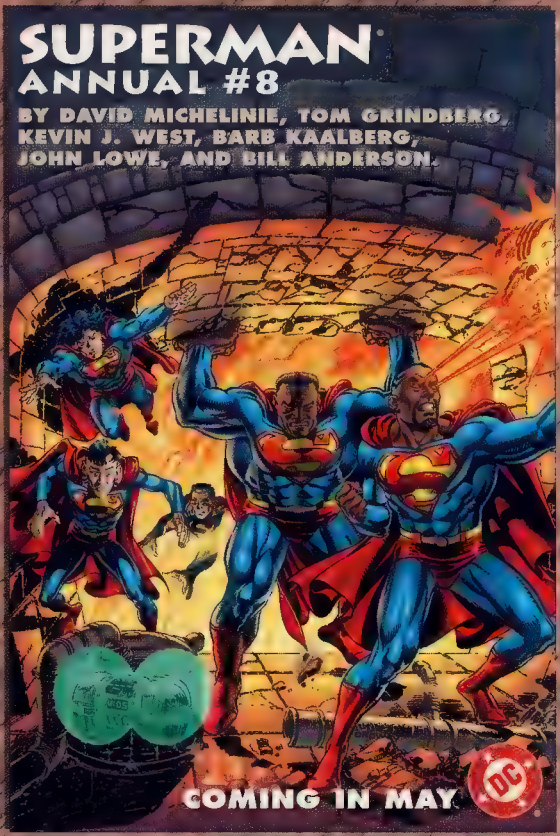
LEGENDS OF THE

DEAD EARTH

EARTH IS DEAD.
BUT ON A THOUSAND WORLDS, IN A THOUSAND WAYS,
EARTH'S GREATEST HEROES LIVE ON.

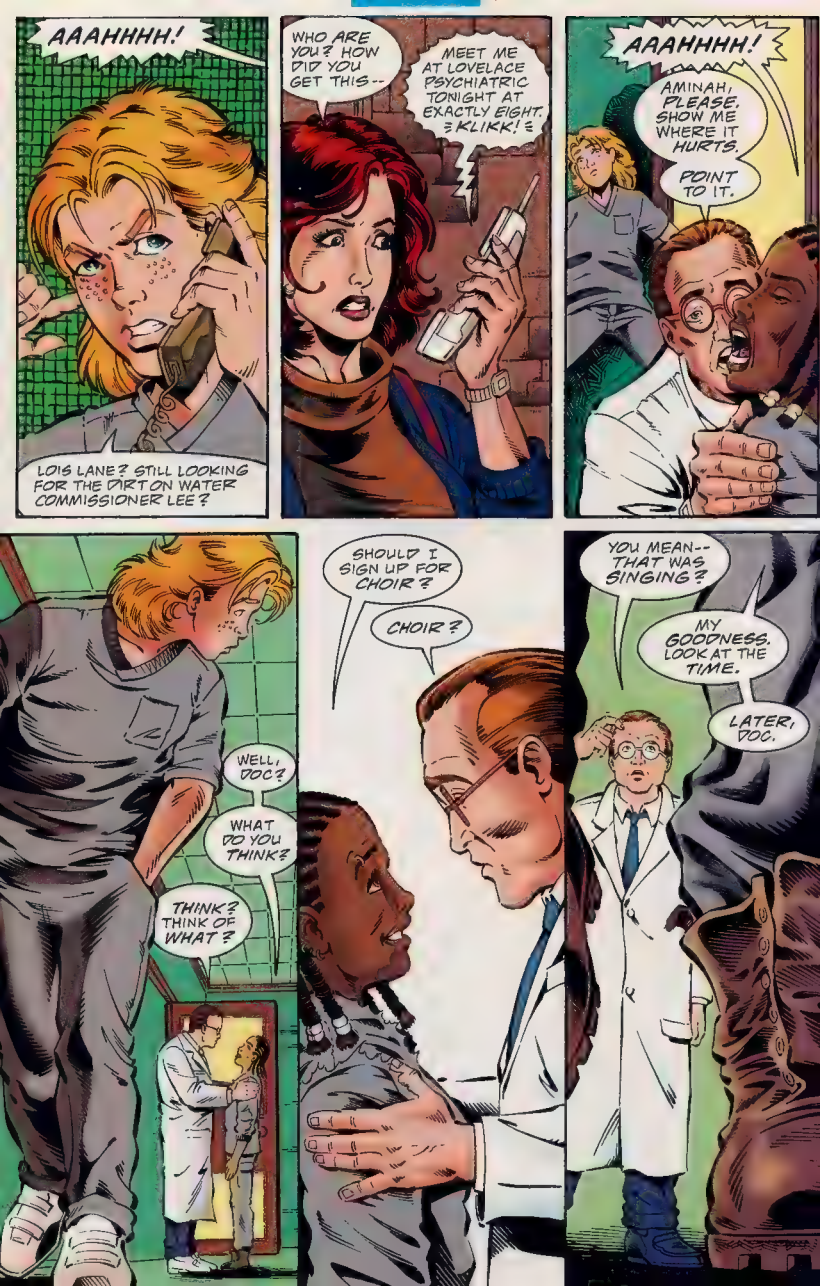
SUPERMAN ANNUAL #8

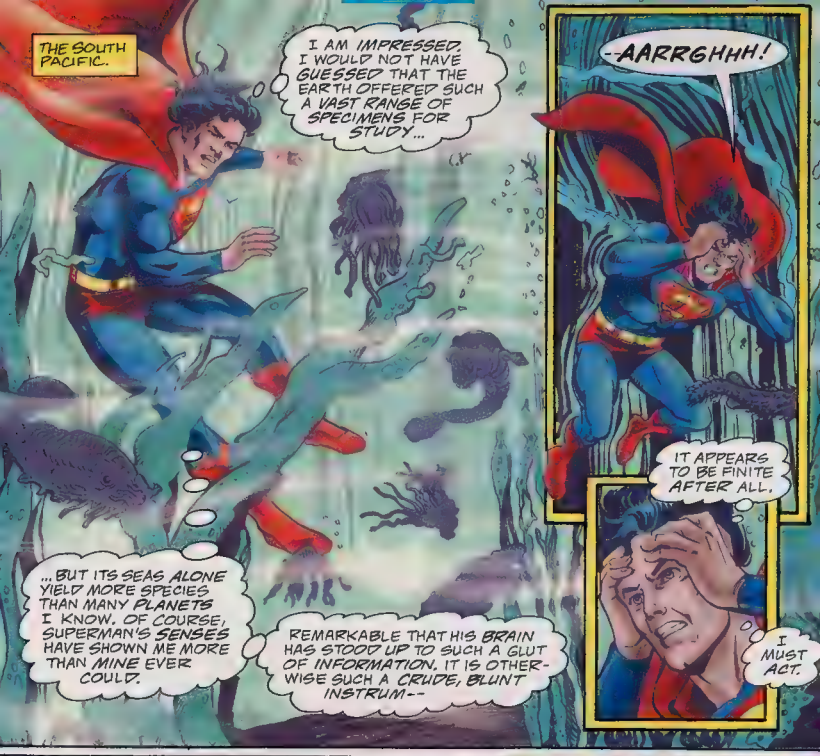
BY DAVID MICHELINIE, TOM GRINDBERG,
KEVIN J. WEST, BARB KAALBERG,
JOHN LOWE, AND BILL ANDERSON.



COMING IN MAY

ANNUALS 1996


AAAHHHH!
LOIS LANE? STILL LOOKING FOR THE DIRT ON WATER COMMISSIONER LEE?
WHO ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU GET THIS--
MEET ME AT LOVELACE PSYCHIATRIC TONIGHT AT EXACTLY EIGHT. =KLIKK!=
AAAHHHH!
AMINAH, PLEASE, SHOW ME WHERE IT HURTS.
POINT TO IT.
WELL, DOC?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
THINK? THINK OF WHAT?
SHOULD I SIGN UP FOR CHOIR?
CHOIR?
YOU MEAN-- THAT WAS SINGING?
MY GOODNESS. LOOK AT THE TIME.
LATER, DOC.


THE SOUTH PACIFIC.
I AM IMPRESSED. I WOULD NOT HAVE GUESSED THAT THE EARTH OFFERED SUCH A VAST RANGE OF SPECIMENS FOR STUDY...
...BUT ITS SEAS ALONE YIELD MORE SPECIES THAN MANY PLANETS I KNOW. OF COURSE, SUPERMAN'S SENSES HAVE SHOWN ME MORE THAN MINE EVER COULD.
REMARKABLE THAT HIS BRAIN HAS STOOD UP TO SUCH A GLUT OF INFORMATION. IT IS OTHERWISE SUCH A CRUDE, BLUNT INSTRUM--
--AARRGHHH!
IT APPEARS TO BE FINITE AFTER ALL.
I MUST ACT.

ahhhh... THAT'S BETTER. NOTHIN' LIKE A GOOD STIFF BELT.
JAMES, MY FRIEN', WHAT TIME YOU GOT?
FIVE MINUTES T'EIGHT!
THREE MORE HOURS O' THIS DRUDGERY AN' THEN WE CAN GO OUT FER A DRINK! HEH!
MAYBE SOONER, BOYS!

OH, GREAT. RAIN.
LIKE I NEED ANOTHER REASON TO REGRET THIS FOOL'S ERRAND.
Y'KNOW, IF IT RAINS AS BAD AS THEY SAY, WE MIGHT BE STUCK HERE ALL NIGHT.
CAN'T COME DOWN BAD 'NOUGH T'KEEP ME-- WHUHH?
KRASH!
I HEARD IT'S SUPPOSED TO RAIN BUCKETS...
...OR IS THAT BEDPANS?
WHUHH
SMAASH!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! "SUPERMAN"?!
I DROPPED THE BOTTLE, JAMES! HE MADE ME BREAK THE BOTTLE!
KID, YOU ARE SO DEAD--!

DR. GUINNESS, PLEASE. HE'S EXPECTING ME... I THINK.
YOU "THINK"?
YOU TWO ARE SUH-LOWWW!
JUST LIKE YOUR DEATH IS GONNA BE, YOU LITTLE CREEP!
IF YOU CATCH ME--
--'CAUSE I USED TO DANCE AROUND GUYS A LOT FASTER THAN YOU BACK IN MY FOOTBALL DAYS!
FOOTBALL? YOU? OH, RIGHT!
LOOK! LIKE SLIDIN' DOWN THE BANISTER'S GONNA SAVE HIM? WHAT'S HE THINK THIS IS? "HOME ALO--
--AAHHH!
WHLINK!
WHLIMP!
CLUNK!

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BATMAN: GCPD

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COMING IN JUNE

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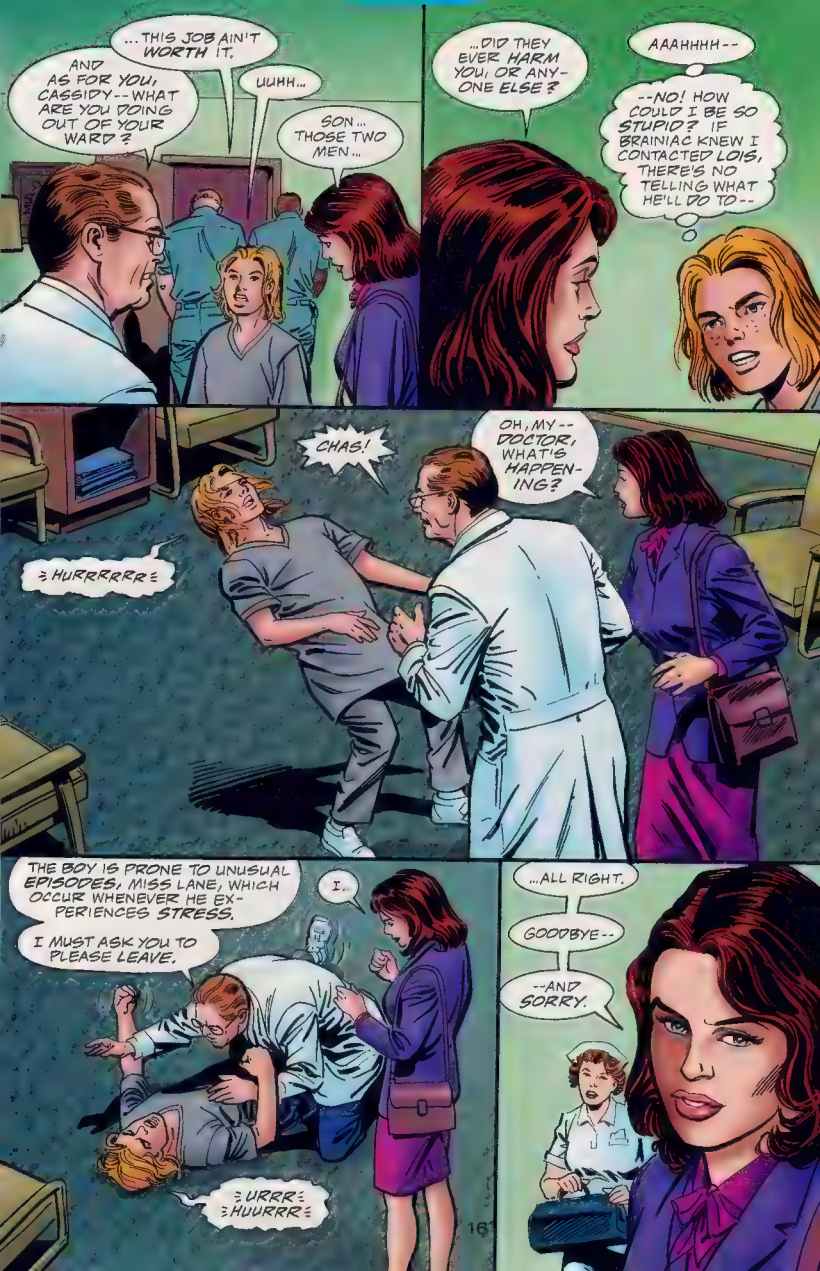
BUT ON A THOUSAND WORLDS, IN A THOUSAND WAYS,
EARTH'S GREATEST HEROES LIVE ON.

ANNUALS 1996

DR. GUINNESS, I'M--
I RECOGNIZE YOU, MS. LANE. FRANKLY, I DON'T KNOW OF ANYTHING AROUND HERE THAT COULD POSSIBLY INTEREST YOUR NEWSPAPER.
ARE WE IN SOME KIND OF TROUBLE?
NO, DOCTOR. I GOT A CALL TODAY FROM--
AAHHHH! HELPP!
YOU GET BACK HERE, BOY, SO WE CAN KILL YOU!
WE'LL CATCH YOU EVENTUALLY, YOU LITTLE--
WHY YES, DR. GUINNESS. YES, I THINK YOU ARE.
ARE THOSE THERAPY AIDES?
EX-THERAPY AIDES, MS. LANE! I ASSURE YOU, THIS IS NOT THE WAY WE CONDUCT OURSELVES AT LOVELACE!
GET OUT! YOU'RE FIRED!
WHAT? BUT HE--
FORGET IT, ERIC...


...THIS JOB AIN'T WORTH IT.
AND AS FOR YOU, CASSIDY--WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT OF YOUR WARD?
UUHH...
SON... THOSE TWO MEN...
...DID THEY EVER HARM YOU, OR ANY-ONE ELSE?
AAAHHHH--
--NO! HOW COULD I BE SO STUPID? IF BRAINIAC KNEW I CONTACTED LOIS, THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE'LL DO TO--
CHAS!
OH, MY-- DOCTOR, WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING?
:HURRRRR:
THE BOY IS PRONE TO UNUSUAL EPISODES, MISS LANE, WHICH OCCUR WHENEVER HE EX-PERIENCES STRESS.
I MUST ASK YOU TO PLEASE LEAVE.
I.
:URRR:
:HUURRR:
...ALL RIGHT.
GOODBYE--
--AND SORRY.

THERE.
MOUNT EVEREST.
DONE.
THIS DEVICE SHALL BRING ABOUT THE END OF MY PROBLEMS AND THE BEGINNING OF EARTH'S...
...PROVIDED I SURMOUNT ONE FINAL OBSTACLE!
BECAUSE THIS CRUDE KRYPTONIAN BRAIN WILL NOT SUPPORT MY MENTAL POWERS--
--I STILL LACK DIRECT ACCESS TO THE EARTHLINGS' MINDS. MY PLAN IS UTTERLY DEPENDENT UPON SUCH ACCESS.
A METHOD MUST EXIST! AND IF IT DOES--
--THEN SURELY SUPERMAN'S WONDROUS SENSES CAN LOCATE IT!
I WILL SIMPLY OBSERVE THE EARTHMEN--

--AND PERHAPS THEY WILL SHOW ME THE PORTAL TO THEIR SOULS, THE KEY TO THEIR--
--AND NEXT UP: A TRAINED DOG IS CHARGED WITH PHONING FALSE ALARMS TO 911!
AHAHAHAHA! AIN'T I A LI'L RAT!
--YOU'RE A LIFEGUARD, DARN IT! A ROLE MODEL!
SHUT UP AND KISS ME!
...AND I READ THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET, AND, FRANKLY, IT READS LIKE HE INHALED!
--OH.
HA.

DAILY PLANET
Wednesday, May 22, 1996
50¢
SUPERMAN TO ADDRESS METROPOLIS
LIVE BROADCAST ON WGBS
THIS IS A GIFT FROM ABOVE-- AND RIGHT DURING SWEEPS!
GUARANTEED HUNDRED SHARE, JIMMY!
--AND I'M COUNTING ON YOU GOOD CITIZENS OF METROPOLIS --
--TO WATCH WGBS TONIGHT AT EIGHT FOR AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE!
Gotta watch Wonner-Watch Warner
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, BRAINIAC?
WELL, ONE THING'S CERTAIN--
--I WON'T FIND OUT WHILE I'M COOPED UP HERE.

AMINAH, GO BACK! I'M OK!
NO!
YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T COME WITH ME!
YOU'RE NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE! I HATE TO SAY THIS, BUT--
--YOU'RE NOT SUPERMAN. YOU CAN'T JUST FLY OFF THE ROOF!
TRUST ME.
ALL RIGHT, BED CHECK! LET'S SEE ALL THOSE BIG SLEEPY SMILES AND--
--CASSIDY?
CASSIDY?!
≡GLUGG≡ GOOD IDEA TO HIDE HERE LONG AS THE RAIN AN' THE WHISKEY HOLD OU--
SHUT UP! LISTEN!
PING! ALL FLOORS ON ALERT! PATIENT MISSING FROM YOUTH WARD. WHITE MALE.. 15 YEARS OLD. SLIGHT BUILD.
NAME: CHAS CASSIDY!
HA! "SUPER-MAN!"
SLAP!
C'MON, JAMESIE--LET'S GO GET OUR JOBS BACK. I'LL TAKE THE BASE-MENT--

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CDC1

WATCH THIS SPACE

Unsung heroes? That's probably **too strong** a term for comic-book editors, considering the size **credit** they have on the splash page of every book...but while they're noted in the actual titles they work on, an awful lot of what they do is **unknown and incomprehensible** if you just weigh and measure the tangible result.

"It's all pain," is Dan Thorsland's description of the job he's enmeshed in—the comic-book equivalent of what movie folks charmingly call **"development hell."** Dan's got several projects in progress, none of which is a straightforward ongoing title. He's trying to create a corner of the DC Universe devoted to the **weird,** without treading on the Vertigo adult occult niche. **FATE** will wrap up its current run and come back as a Keith Giffen/Ron Wagner collaboration with a new title next year. **CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN** is a revival that's gone through three proposals before settling into the firm rhythms of Steven Grant and Len Kaminski, who have reexamined the classic Jack Kirby creation in light of what our generation considers truly unknown. **NIGHT FORCE** has been Marv Wolfman's main project since the end of TITANS (besides rebuilding his house after the Northridge quake and a brand-new animation/toy property, that is), and **hot** *Astro City* artist Brent Anderson has signed on to launch the project as penciller. Dan would pull out his hair getting them all ready to launch, if he hadn't already been shaving his head for years.

Beginner's luck is an unfair testimonial to Associate Editor Mike McAvennie's success with his **first** solo title, SUPERMAN ADVENTURES, but perhaps it took a "virgin" to have the **courage** to proposition some extraordinary talent to kick off his series. SUPERMAN animated series co-producers **Paul Dini and Bruce Timm** (and *every*-award-winners for MAD LOVE) are working on the first issue (with regular artists Rick Burchett and Terry Austin) despite the crushing preproduction deadlines of the TV show, but then taking over as of the second issue is writer **Scott McCloud**. Scott, who has also won virtually every award our field has to offer for his work on *ZOT* and *UNDERSTANDING COMICS*, will be doing his first work for DC since he left a **board job** in our production department over a decade ago. When badgered at the DCU editorial meeting for the **secret** of how he got Scott on board, Mac just shrugged laconically and said, "I asked him." Sometimes, that's the **most important trick** an editor can use.

Uncredited editors exist too—like Greg Ross, who masterminds **DC COMICS ONLINE** for us. Last month he launched a whole new look for DCO, complete with a **new graphical interface**, including faster (e.g., cheaper) downloading, improved e-mail to our editors, and more. There's even a **DCO newsletter** you can receive by sending an e-mail request to him at DCOGJRoss@aol.com, and an **express entrance** to our most popular feature, the chat rooms, by using keyword DC Chat from anywhere in America Online's vast domains.

So whether it's suffering, getting lucky, or vanishing into an invisible bitstream, we've probably got an editor trying it. **Anything** to bring our best to you...

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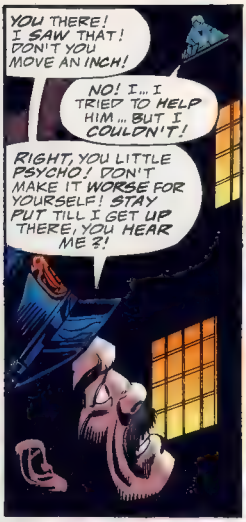
NEXT WEEK: **BATMAN CHRONICLES #5** ■ **DETECTIVE COMICS #699** ■ **EXTREME JUSTICE #18** ■ **FLASH #115** ■ **GUY GARDNER: WARRIOR ANNUAL #2** ■ **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #82** ■ **THE SPECTRE #43** ■ **SUPERMAN: MAN OF STEEL #58** ■ **TAKION #2** ■ **WONDER WOMAN #111** ■ and a one-shot **ARSENAL SPECIAL** for some Memorial Day hit-the-beaches reading!

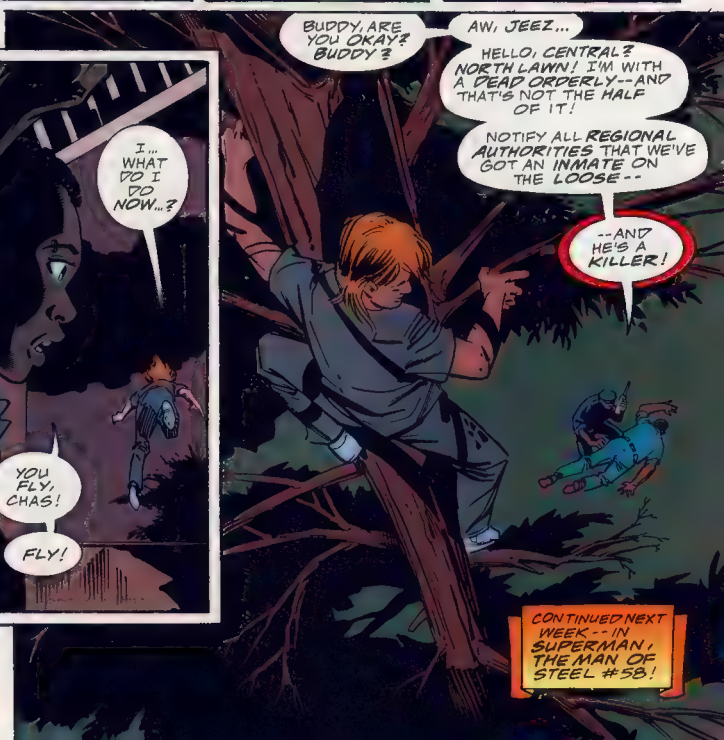
"--AND YOU TAKE THE ROOF!"
CHAS! PLEASE! TREE'S TOO FAR AWAY!
SINGLE BOUND. I CAN MAKE IT.
NOT WITHOUT A PUSH, "SUPERMAN"!
JAMES!
AWW.. I KNEW IT.
JAMES, SLOW DOWN! IT'S SLICK HERE--!
WHERE YA GONNA RUN TO NOW, BOY?
JAMES!
}WHUFF!{
JAMES, LOOK OUT!
AAAAH--
--AAAHH--

JAAAMES!
AAAAAAH!

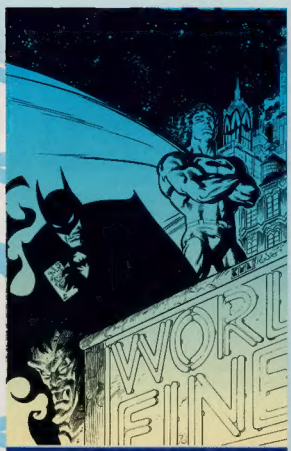
HEY! WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE--
--ABOUT?
OH, MY GOD...
CHUD!


YOU THERE! I SAW THAT! DON'T YOU MOVE AN INCH!
NO! I... I TRIED TO HELP HIM... BUT I COULDN'T!
RIGHT, YOU LITTLE PSYCHO! DON'T MAKE IT WORSE FOR YOURSELF! STAY PUT TILL I GET UP THERE, YOU HEAR ME?!

I... WHAT DO I DO NOW...?
YOU FLY, CHAS!
FLY!


BUDDY, ARE YOU OKAY? BUDDY?
AW, JEEZ...
HELLO, CENTRAL? NORTH LAWN! I'M WITH A DEAD ORDERLY--AND THAT'S NOT THE HALF OF IT!
NOTIFY ALL REGIONAL AUTHORITIES THAT WE'VE GOT AN INMATE ON THE LOOSE--
--AND HE'S A KILLER!
CONTINUED NEXT WEEK--IN SUPERMAN, THE MAN OF STEEL #58!

RE: ACTION



Hmmm...Looks like ACTION #719 woke a lot of you up out there and prompted strong commentary from all. See for yourselves...

Dear Re:Action:

ACTION COMICS #719 was an extremely powerful issue! It brought back memories of "A Death in the Family," only this time, it was *Superman* who was out for blood! It was also great watching the Batman desperately trying to keep Supes on the side of the angels, while the Joker kept putting him through hell. And the ending was *perfect!* I guess life *is* a joke to the Joker.

AARON RENAUD
ROSWELL, CA

Yes it is, Aaron; unfortunately, the Joker's ***victims*** *don't find him so funny...*

Dear Super-Team:

May I give Superman a small piece of advice? Lay off the psychobabble and use a little common sense. The *killer* is the one who is responsible for his actions, not the *victim*. The *murderer* should pay the price, not the innocent *victim*, got it?

Knucklehead.

BRIAN KELLEY
BELLMAWR, NJ

P.S. That goes *double* for Batman.

Hey, Brian, put yourself in Big Blue's boots for a moment. Could ***you*** *kill someone, even if you thought it was for the best of reasons? Don't say yes too quick, 'cause then you'd be a real scary person to know. Just think about it, OK?*

Dear ACTION Team:

ACTION COMICS #719 was a very enjoyable start to "Guest-Star Month." Ever since the Joker made his last appearance in the Super-books, we've been waiting for the time when that dangling plotline concerning his lethal toy would be resolved. Now that it has, I think the repercussions of this issue will have serious ramifications in the months to come.

David Michelinie did a good job showing that Batman and Superman's "chummy old pals" act is most certainly a thing of the past, replaced by the sort of relationship that would see the Dark Knight clinically manipulate the Man of Steel rather than actually *trust* him. The highlight of the story had to be that final confrontation with the Clown Prince of Crime. No punch-ups or fistfights—just pure psychological intrigue.

The Joker may think his plan failed, but I have a feeling that his actions may have caused irreparable cracks to appear in Lois and Clark's relationship, making this a far more significant story than we may have realized at first. Would *any* of us be pleased that Clark had put the Joker's life over ours, however noble his reasons were? I'm looking forward to the rest of this month's team-ups...

ANDY OLIVER
UPMINSTER, ESSEX
ENGLAND

Dear Superfolk:

ACTION COMICS #719 was the first comic I've read in 30 years that has moved me enough to write about. The cover was outstanding, the interior artwork superb (especially pages 1 and 17) and the story... Can we talk?

Superman's main squeeze has two hours to live. Lois Lane. This is *the* Lois Lane, right? The Joker tells Superman how to save Lois Lane. Supes gets upset. Batman tells Supes to be cool. And somewhere between pages 19 and 20, Superman shrugs his shoulders and decides to let Lois Lane—*the* Lois Lane—die, and both Batman and Superman figure that even though the Joker's a mass-murderer, he's an OK guy. Realizing that I *must* have missed something, I reread the book. Nope, this isn't a different Lois Lane. Nope, there weren't pages missing.

Come on, guys! Lois Lane is going to *die* and Superman smashes a tray in the Batcave? I can't believe that a cool story like this was only given a one-issue treatment. You could have turned this into a frightening three- or four-parter. This could have been as compelling as the "Red Glass Trilogy." I mean, did we really even *need* Batman? I hope you didn't pay him too much for this appearance.

Folks, I mean you no disrespect. My somewhat sizable comic-book collection is 75 percent Superman, and I love 'em all, but I had a hard time swallowing *this* issue.

JOE IAQUINTO
GLENDALE, CA

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Geez, Joe, it's no wonder you had problems with the issue—you're supposed to ***read*** *it, not* ***eat*** *it! (Though maybe taking it with a grain of salt would've helped...)*

Dear Superpeople:

I'm writing this letter in response to ACTION COMICS #719, in which Clark must decide between killing the Joker and letting Lois die. As Clark himself notes, "I've never faced a harder decision, ever." Pretty strong words, coming from a man who has made as many tough decisions as Superman. My personal feeling is that Clark needs to learn to divorce himself somewhat from situations that hit close to home, as did this one. Clark's frenzied, almost maniacal behavior in this issue was reminiscent of that during "Dead Again," when he faced another serious personal issue—that of identity. A lack of clear-headed thinking could engender problems for the Man of Steel.

The main point of this letter is a hope that you may be able to clear up some confusion concerning Clark's personal code against killing. Superman is obviously willing to kill a sentient being if enough innocents are threatened, as he (or *thought* he) killed Doomsday. He even let Waverider kill Doomsday for good (?) in the HUNTER/PREY miniseries, and didn't object when the Tribunal (minus one) executed the Cyborg and Tribunal Prime.

If this is so, how many innocents would have to be threatened by the Joker before Clark would kill him? Would he have killed the Joker to save ten people? Two? If the answer is that he would *never* kill, even just to save two people, wouldn't Clark be a failure as a hero?

I certainly hope Clark and Lois can resolve some of their personal issues. ("I understand...I think.") *I* think we've all waited long enough for the wedding. Right now, the most unrealistic element of this comic is the length of their engagement.

David Michelinie's story raised a lot of thought-provoking questions, and is a good study of the dynamics between Batman and Superman. Kieron Dwyer and Denis Rodier's Superman and Lois are still leaving much to be desired (Why do they look so *old*?), but their Batman was great, and their Joker was *excellent!* (Check out that almost-surreal Cheshire cat image in the third panel on page 16!)

Thanks for continuing the adventures of my hero in a manner that left me thinking.

AARON REGAN
EVANSTON, IL

Thanks, Aaron, though let's clear up some points: First, Superman is ***not*** *a stone-cold killer; executing the Pocket Universe villains back in SUPERMAN #22 almost shattered him irreparably. He was out to* ***stop*** *Doomsday in SUPERMAN #75, not necessarily kill him. Metropolis would certainly have been destroyed otherwise, so Big Blue pulled out all the stops to do it (and at the cost of his own life). And Supes never allowed Doomsday or Tribunal Prime to be murdered in cold blood; in both cases, the situation was taken out of his hands by other factors (and remember, Supes* ***saved*** *the Cyborg's life in ACTION #717).*

Second, if you were Lois or Clark and had been through what they have, ***you'd*** *probably age prematurely too! Seriously, we think Kieron and Denis rendered them just fine; they were unique while adhering to the stature and consistency of our other super-artists. Thanks for playing!*

Dear Super-Team:

I just had to write in and tell you that ACTION COMICS #719 was by far the best story told as yet. I've been collecting comics now for almost five years, and this story was absolutely the "WORLD'S FINEST."

This issue was like a dream. It contained all of my favorite things: Superman, Batman and a story ending that resembled *Return of the Jedi.* Superman (Luke Skywalker) confronting the Joker (Darth Vader), the Joker tempting Supes to the Dark Side (or is that *Darkseid*?) the same way Vader tries to turn Luke. Then, when the Joker says he'll use the toxin to poison the Kents (like Vader says he'll turn Leia to the Dark Side), Supes/Luke goes over the edge! But because Batman is there, he's able to reason with Supes that killing the Joker is not the right thing to do. This issue was the most moving story I've read in a long time. Truly, it was story-telling at its finest—its WORLD'S finest!

KENNETH J. GARRETT
WELLINGTON, OH

Thanks, Kenneth. Although your analogy seems a bit... ***Forced****, we'll give you a great big* ***Han****, as well as this month's* ***Solo*** *Baldy prize, for comments that* ***Artoo*** *good to go unrewarded! By the way...was Batman Ben Kenobi?* ***Chewie*** *on that awhile, pal!*

—Mike McAvennie
Jedi Nut (no relation to Jabba the Nut)

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

NEXT WEEK: It's Supergirl vs. Superman/Brainiac vs. Chas/Superman vs....Oh, just check out MAN OF STEEL #58 in seven days by Tom Peyer, Mark Waid, Curt Swan, Chris Renaud, Steven Butler and Chris Marrinan!

IN TWO WEEKS: Supes's "Identity Crisis" comes to a mind-blowin' end in SUPERMAN #114! Unfortunately, not even Tom Peyer, Mark Waid, Steven Butler, Chris Marrinan, Curt Swan or Chris Renaud know for sure *whose* mind has been blown...

IN THREE WEEKS: There are monsters on the loose in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #537! Who's responsible? Better yet, how do you stop 'em? Hopefully, Karl Kesel, Stuart Immonen and Jose Marzan, Jr. used their month off to make a giant net. We'll know in twenty-one days!

NEXT MONTH: Get ready to ruuuuMMMMBLLEE in ACTION #724. No, Jackie Chan's not in the book, but Brawl is! So, instead, get ready to BRAAAWWWLLL in twenty-days with David Michelinie, guest penciller Tom Morgan and Denis Rodier!

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Dave Johnson kicked this month's cover image into high gears, and, as usual, the hue-mongously talented Patrick Martin provided the color. It's an eyeful!

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